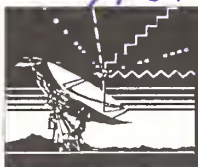


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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2693

December 23, 1994

EARLY WARNING DISASTER SYSTEM -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy announced (December 19) the expansion of the nation's early warning disaster network in rural America. This Clinton Administration initiative established the site for the first new transmitter, which was made operational in Piedmont, Alabama. That's near the place where a tornado killed 20 worshippers in a church on Palm Sunday this year. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy said, "Advance notice--even a few moments--is central to taking the right safety actions. Expansion of the network is a vital step which will save lives." The initiative is a collaborative effort among several Alabama and federal agencies, including USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS), and the National Weather Service, which operates the All Hazard Weather Radio Network. **Contact: Eileen McMahon (202) 720-1255.**

NEW AGENCY, NEW ADMINISTRATOR -- James Robert Baker has been named the first administrator of the USDA's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA). GIPSA is a new agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This agency is a combination of the Federal Grain Inspection Service and the Packers and Stockyards Administration. Before joining GIPSA, Baker was the manager of Lewis Livestock Company in Conway, Arkansas. Also, he has been chairman of the Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission since 1989. Baker has spent the past 27 years in production agriculture. **Contact: Dana Stewart (202) 720-5091.**

BEEF FROM AUSTRALIA NO LONGER ON HOLD -- USDA will not detain further some 36 million pounds of frozen beef from Australia which was held in warehouses since November 19. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service had impounded the beef pending results of testing for the possible presence of chlorfluazuron, a pesticide not registered used on cotton crops later fed to Australian cattle, and not registered for use in the U.S. Michael R. Taylor, Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety, said, "All test results for the pesticide chlorfluazuron in the beef entering the U.S. were negative, and EPA has advised us that even if present at low levels, this pesticide does not pose a risk concern. No public health purpose would be served by further detaining this product." **Contact: Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113.**

WATERMELON REFUNDS ELIMINATED -- Watermelon producers, handlers and importers voted in a November referendum to amend the Watermelon Research and Promotion Plan, according the Department of Agriculture (December 7). The amendments will eliminate the refund of assessments provision, assess watermelon imports and add importer members to the National Watermelon Promotion Board. Lon Hatamiya, Administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service said, "Of those voting, 61 percent favored eliminating refund of assessments and 81 percent favored assessing watermelon imports and the addition of watermelon importers to the board." The plan is authorized by the Watermelon Research and Promotion Act, and the referendum was conducted by USDA. The Act requires a simple majority of votes to approve such changes. **Contact: Clarence Steinberg (202) 720-8998.**

ASSESSMENT UP FOR EGG PRODUCERS -- USDA will increase the assessment rate paid by egg producers to the American Egg Board by amending the Egg Research and Promotion Order. The new assessment will be 10 cents per 30-dozen case of commercial eggs, double the current assessment of 5 cents per case. The new rate will go into effect Feb. 1, 1995. The increase was approved by egg producers who voted in a national referendum during the fall of 1994. The increase follows a 1993 amendment to the Egg Research and Consumer Information Act, which authorized an increase. The Act authorizes the Egg Research and Promotion Order. **Contact: Gil High (202) 720-8998.**

DIPPING ERADICATES CHRYSANTHEMUM DISEASE -- USDA scientists report that dipping chrysanthemum plants in a fungicide protects them from a disease posing a devastating threat to commercial nurseries in the U.S. The fungicide, myclobutanil, is now being used to prevent the introduction of chrysanthemum white rust disease into the U.S. Morris Bonde of the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), said, "A .01 percent solution of myclobutanil in water eradicates chrysanthemum white rust disease." USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has now incorporated the fungicide dip in a program to eradicate white rust disease. The project was a cooperative effort among ARS, APHIS, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and the flower industry. Members of the flower industry provided the chrysanthemum plants to the Frederick, MD lab for their use throughout the study. **Contact: Sean Adams (301) 344-2723.**

COMMENTS ON HASS AVOCADO IMPORTS -- USDA is extending its comment period regarding the possible importation of Hass Avocados from Mexico until January 3. B. Glen Lee, Deputy Administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) said, "We are extending the comment period to ensure that we consider all relevant issues associated with the possible importation of Hass avocados from Mexico." APHIS establishes growing, packing, shipping and other conditions whereby fruits and vegetables can be imported into the U.S. without posing a significant pest risk to American agriculture. **Contact: Ed Curlett (301) 436-3256.**

'95 PEANUT POUNDAGE QUOTA -- USDA announced (December 15) a national peanut quota for the 1995 marketing year of 1,350,000 short tons, which is unchanged from the 1994 level. Grant Buntrock, the Acting Administrator of the Consolidated Farm Service Agency, said, "This quota level is the minimum permitted under law." The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 requires the national poundage quota for the 1995 crop of peanuts to be the greater of 1,350,000 short tons or a formula quantity equal to the estimated quantity of peanuts needed for domestic edible, seed and related uses in the 1995 marketing year. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

SOYBEAN PROMOTION BOARD -- Agriculture Mike Espy has named 18 members and three alternates to the United Soybean Board. All appointees will serve 3-year terms beginning in December. The 60-member board is authorized by the 1990 Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act. There are also three temporary members whose terms expire in December. The order provides for an alternate member for each state or region with only one member on the board. Alternates will serve terms that coincide with the terms of members from the state or region which they will represent. The Secretary selected the appointees from soybean producers who were nominated by Qualified State Soybean Boards. **Contact: Alicia L. Ford (202) 720-8998.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1960 -- Is North Dakota an urban state? In this edition of Agriculture USA, Brenda Curtis talks with a population expert about North Dakota's declining population and the impact on life in the Northern Great Plains. (Weekly cassette -- 13-1/2 minute documentary).

CONSUMER TIME # 1441 -- Nature's heat pumps; tobacco use stabilizing; population concerns in North Dakota; toddlers and food safety in the home; a Jekyll and Hyde virus. (Weekly cassette -- 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features).

AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1951 -- CRP contracts extended; a brighter tobacco outlook; long range forecasts; deficiency payments to wheat, oats and barley producers; new I.P.M. initiative. (Weekly cassette -- news features).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tuesday, December 27, weekly weather and crops; Thursday, December 29, hog and pig inventory; world tobacco situation. Friday, December 20, agricultural prices. Monday, January 2, HOLIDAY. Tuesday, January 3, weekly weather and crops; horticultural exports. **These are all of the scheduled USDA reports for December 29-January 9. As always, our radio line will provide other unscheduled news stories every weekday.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURE -- Will Pemble reports on a new vaccine for cattle shipping fever, developed by scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Ames, Iowa. (1:33)

FEATURE -- Repeat of above without narration. (1:33)

FEATURE -- Will Pemble reports on a painless test for colon cancer, developed by scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville, Maryland. (1:37)

FEATURE -- Repeat of above without narration. (1:37)

ACTUALITIES -- President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy and HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros announce winners in the "EZ/EC" program (via satellite from the White House on Wednesday, December 21). The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program supplies funds and incentives to communities for revitalization efforts. Hundreds of communities submitted applications; winning communities are announced.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:

*Galaxy 7, Transponder 9, Channel 9, Audio 6.2 or 6.8, Downlink frequency 3880 Mhz.
Available on Thursdays 3:45 - 4:00 p.m., EDT; Mondays 11:00 - 11:15 a.m., EDT.*

*Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services.
Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072; write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.*

OFF MIKE

AG REPORTER OF THE YEAR...as named by the California Farm Bureau Federation for 1994 is **Roy Isom** (KMJ, Fresno, CA). Roy received this award at the Federation's 76th Annual Meeting in Anaheim. He was selected as the outstanding agricultural reporter who is the best at telling California agriculture's story to the public. Nominations were submitted by county Farm Bureaus. Roy is described as the "voice of agriculture in the Central Valley. He understands the issues, talks with farmers and is deeply committed to agriculture." Roy began reporting farm news in May 1981 and has been KMJ's news director for the past eight years.

ICE STORM...left many families without electricity for three or more days last week in southeast Iowa, northern Missouri and eastern Illinois, reports **Mike Buchanan** (KBIZ, Ottumwa, IA). Aside from inconvenience, there was not much permanent damage. An informational swine meeting is scheduled in Ottumwa on January 21. Hog prices will be a key topic.

RADIO SERVICES SURVEY...should be in your mailbox or your inbox if you are using the weekly radio news features on cassette. Please take time out to complete the survey so that we can plan our services for the future. If you regularly use our programs and did not receive a survey, call **Lynn Wyvill**, 202-720-9951, and she'll fax you a copy. This is not to be confused with an earlier survey about the **Broadcasters Letter**. We thank you for your many replies to that. We're tabulating that information and will report to you soon.

AN EARLY RESPONDENT...to our radio services survey was **Gary Kinnett** (WIAI/WACF/WPAF, Danville, IL) who picked up the phone and told us how he uses USDA radio services. Gary says his listeners call and request our material and adds that **Gary Crawford's** features are particularly popular at holiday time. He uses our weekly documentary **AgUSA** and likes our longer features. We will use Gary's and all of your comments to provide better service in 1995.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



LARRY A. QUINN, Director

Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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